

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 01378 251452Z
ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 SS-14 /019 W
-----130598 251511Z /41
O 250840Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7788

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 1378

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LIMDIS

AF FOR MOOSE AND HARROP

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, ET, US
SUBJECT: NEW AMERICAN AMBASSADOR

REF: ADDIS ABABA 1277

1. I CALLED UPON MOFA AMERICAN DIRECTOR BERHANE DIRESSA MORNING MARCH 25 PRIMARILY TO DISCUSS AGREEMENT REQUEST WHICH HAS NOW BEEN PENDING FOR JUST OVER SEVEN WEEKS. (OTHER SUBJECTS SEPTELS). I TOLD HIM WHAT AMBASSADOR BERGUS HAD REPORTED (KHARTOUM 1208) PERMSEC DAWIT'S SAYING AND MENTIONED DICK MOOSE'S SUGGESTION THAT I AGAIN PURSUE MATTER. BERHANE REPLIED THAT, TO HIS KNOWLEDGE, AGREEMENT HAD DEFINITELY NOT BEEN GRANTED AND SUGGESTED AMBASSADOR BERGUS HAD MISUNDERSTOOD DAWIT'S REMARK. HOWEVER, HE REITERATED THAT "EVERYONE IS OPTIMISTIC, JUST AS MAJOR DAWIT TOLD YOU AT YOUR LAST MEETING (MARCH 13)." HE RECALLED THAT THIS WAS IN LINE WITH CHAIRMAN MENGISTU'S (ACTUALLY, AS BILL HARROP REMEMBERS, QUESTION DID NOT ARISE DURING SESSION WITH MENGISTU) AND FOREIGN MINISTER FELLEKE'S ASSURANCES TO DAVID AARON.
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2. AFTER CONSIDERABLE CONVERSATION IN AMHARIC WITH TWO ASSOCIATES PRESENT, BERHANE THEN SUGGESTED THAT IT WOULD PERHAPS BE USEFUL TO ARRANGE A MEETING FOR ME ON THE SUBJECT WITH FELLEKE "TO MAKE HIM AWARE OF AMERICAN PRESSURES THAT ARE GROWING." I AGREED. POL COUNS AND I DEFINITELY GOT THE IMPRESSION THAT THERE MAY BE SOMETHING FISHY

GOING ON THAT THEY WERE NOT SHARING WITH US. INCIDENTALLY, DURING MARCH 23 DISCUSSION WITH ME AT ARAB LEAGUE RECEPTION, SOVIET MINISTER-COUNSELOR WAS VERY CRITICAL OF PERISCOPE ARTICLE IN MARCH 6 NEWSWEEK, SAYING, "IT IS IMPORTANT UNITED STATES HAVE GOOD VIEW OF SOVIET UNION HERE." FURTHER, FRENCH AMBASSADOR HAS WORD AND IS SPREADING IT AROUND THAT YUGOSLAV FOREIGN MINISTER HAD MADE DEMARCHE TO EPMG ON OUR BEHALF. LITTLE BY LITTLE AGREEMENT FOR US AMBASSADOR IS BECOMING A MAIN TOPIC OF COCKTAIL CIRCUIT. NATURALLY WE ARE NON-COMMITTAL.

3. UNTIL THISMORNING'S CONVERSATION, I WAS FAIRLY CONFIDENT THAT DELAY WAS PURELY BUREAUCRATIC AND IN LINE WITH OTHERS. HOWEVER, I AM MORE APPREHENSIVE THAT TIMING IS BECOMING AN ETHIOPIAN BARGAINING CHIP. NEXT STEP IS TO AWAIT CALL FROM FELLEKE (UNLESS, OF COURSE, TODAY'S DEMARCHE SUCCEEDS) OR PRESS FOR A MEETING WITH HIM, BUT IN THIS CASE DEFINITE INSTRUCTIONS FROM DEPARTMENT WOULD BE HELPFUL. MATHERON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AMBASSADOR DESIGNATE, AGREEMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ADDIS01378
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780132-0210
Format: TEL
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780325/aaaaavbc.tel
Line Count: 81
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: faaeadbd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS, STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS, STADIS
Reference: 78 ADDIS ABABA 1277
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3204392
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW AMERICAN AMBASSADOR
TAGS: PDIP, ET, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/faaeadbd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014